



ALAMEDA COUNTY
CONGESTION MANAGEMENT AGENCY

1333 BROADWAY, SUITE 220 • OAKLAND, CA 94612 • PHONE: (510) 836-2560 • FAX: (510) 836-2185
E-MAIL: mail@accma.ca.gov • WEB SITE: accma.ca.gov

October 26, 2007

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Mr. Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director
Ms. Carrie Pourvahidi, Deputy Director
California High-Speed Rail Authority, EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/
Statement for a Proposed High-Speed Train System

Dear Mr. Leavitt and Ms. Pourvahidi:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Bay Area to Central Valley High Speed Train Program EIR/EIS. The EIR/EIS generally describes the environmental impacts of a proposed High Speed Rail (HSR) system within this broad corridor including two pass alignments: Altamont Pass in eastern Alameda County and Pacheco Pass in southern Santa Clara County. The EIR/EIS analyzes impacts of and proposed general mitigation strategies for both proposed alignment alternatives, including their station location options.

L018-1

At their October 25th, 2007 Board meeting, the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA) Board endorsed MTC's position as articulated in the attached letter and Resolution.

L018-2

Additionally, the ACCMA respectfully submits the following comments on the Draft EIR/EIS:

L018-3

The following issues should be addressed in detail in the project-specific EIR/EIS:

Funding

A funding plan addressing capital, operations and maintenance for the alternatives should be identified. This would include funding plans for both the ultimate project and usable segments.

L018-4

Connectivity and Phasing

The High Speed Rail would connect with commuter rail, such as ACE, at some locations in Alameda County. The design and operating plan for these stations should demonstrate that the connections are feasible and easy to use. When HSR connects to ACE, electrification of the Commuter Rail system should occur in order to improve service and connections.

L018-5

In some of the rail segments, High Speed Rail would share tracks with regional rail, allowing regional rail to improve travel times and increase ridership. The construction of High Speed Rail, including the regional rail overlay system, should be phased so that railway sections are usable in the short-term.

L018-6

Ridership Impacts on Existing Rail System

The EIR/EIS should address how the High Speed Rail would affect ridership on existing rail systems, such as the impact of High Speed Rail to San Jose on ACE or on the future BART extension to San Jose.

L018-7

Station Location & Design

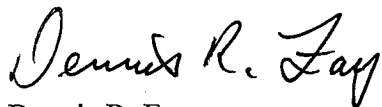
As an alignment is chosen, and additional environmental review is undertaken, specific community concerns should be addressed with regards to station and design location and design and access.

L018-8

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this program EIR/EIS. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 510/836-2560 if you require additional information.

L018-9

Sincerely,



Dennis R. Fay
Executive Director

cc: Beth Walukas, Manager of Planning
Diane Stark, Senior Transportation Planner
file: CMP - Environmental Review Opinions - Responses - 2007



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700
TEL 510.817.5700
TTY/TDD 510.817.5769
FAX 510.817.5848
E-MAIL info@mtc.ca.gov
WEB www.mtc.ca.gov

October 26, 2007

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Mr. Mehdi Morshed
Executive Director
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California High-Speed Rail Authority, Bay Area to Central Valley Draft EIR/EIS
Comments

Dear Mr. Morshed:

As you know, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission adopted Resolution No. 3829 (see attached) on October 24, 2007, which contains its comments on the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRAs) Bay Area to Central Valley Draft EIR/EIS. In summary, MTC:

1. Supports building a statewide high-speed rail (HSR) system – HSR has the potential to reduce local and statewide vehicle congestion, divert air passenger demand away from congested airports, and reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Re-confirms support for the Pacheco alignment, as previously stated in MTC Resolution 3198, as the main HSR express line between Northern and Southern California as outlined in #3 and 4 below, and supports improvements in the Altamont corridor, as described in #5, 6 and 7 below, to serve interregional and local travel between the Bay Area and the Northern San Joaquin Valley.
3. Supports the Pacheco alignment due to several of the reasons stated in MTC Resolution No. 3198:
 - has the highest statewide ridership demand, and best serves HSR's key market - Northern California to Southern California, connecting the two most congested regions in the state
 - provides direct service to all three major cities - San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland
 - avoids construction of a new bay crossing or tube required by the Altamont Pass entry for San Francisco service.
4. Recommends a new Pacheco alignment that routes all trains up the San Francisco peninsula through San Jose and San Francisco, with a connecting Transbay tube to Oakland. This variant provides a superior operating plan compared to the previous Commission adopted Pacheco alignment with all three cities on a single line, is about \$2 billion less than the previous alignment, avoids duplication with BART/Capitol Corridor/ACE, avoids risk of negotiating with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) for East

Mr. Mehdi Morshed
October 26, 2007
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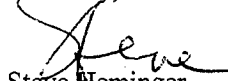
Bay rail right of way needs and avoids construction within the I-880 freeway in Santa Clara County.

5. Endorses the Altamont route as better suited to serve interregional and local travel between the Bay Area and the Northern San Joaquin Valley. At the same time the Pacheco pass alignment is being built, the CHSRA should upgrade interregional services between Peninsula – Tri Valley – Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley. As a first step, ACE service can be improved by adding tracks and improving signaling to provide higher speed and more reliable service that would connect with a future BART station in Livermore (Greenville Road or Isabel/Stanley based on further BART analyses); these improvements would need to be compatible with future HSR. Electrification of ACE trains should be implemented once the UPRR tracks have been acquired. An electrified regional train capable of higher speeds, with additional grade separations would improve road circulation, and would also be compatible with lightweight equipment operating in the Dumbarton corridor.
6. Requests that the CHSRA also evaluate an alternative in the Altamont corridor that terminates HSR at a proposed BART Livermore station where HSR passengers could be dispersed to Bay Area locations throughout the BART system, together with improved ACE service to Santa Clara County.
7. Requests that CHSRA consider seeking additional HSR bond funds dedicated to upgrading the Altamont corridor for regional service.

If you or your staff has any questions regarding these comments, please contact Doug Kimsey of our staff by phone at 510.817.5790 or email at dkimsey@mtc.ca.gov.

MTC looks forward to working with you and the Authority in helping deliver HSR to California and the Bay Area.

Sincerely,


Steve Heminger
Executive Director

cc: Honorable Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco
Honorable Chuck Reed, Mayor of San Jose
Honorable Ron Dellums, Mayor of Oakland

SH: DK
J:\PROJECT\HSR_RR_Study\HSR Element\DEIR-DEIS\CHSRA Comment Letter.doc
Attachments

Date: October 24, 2007
Referred by: Planning Committee

ABSTRACT
Resolution No. 3829

This resolution adopts MTC's comments on the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report for Potential High Speed Rail Service into the Bay Area and authorized the Executive Director or his designee to transmit those comments to the CHSRA.

Further discussion of this action is contained in the MTC "Executive Director's Memorandum" dated October 5, 2007.

Date: October 24, 2007
Referred by: Planning Committee

RE: Adopts MTC's comments on the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report for Potential High Speed Rail Service into the Bay Area and authorized the Executive Director or his designee to transmit those comments to the CHSRA.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 3829

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the regional transportation planning agency for the San Francisco Bay Area pursuant to Government Code Section 66500 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority), established pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 185000 et seq., is developing a proposal to finance and construct a statewide high speed rail system for voter consideration on the November, 2008 statewide ballot; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report for potential high speed rail service into the Bay Area, with a close of comment date of October 26, 2007; and

WHEREAS, MTC has assisted the Authority in discharging its duties by providing travel forecasting information, other technical assistance, and co-hosting public outreach workshops in the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the region for MTC to express its recommendations on the Bay Area entry alignment and terminal locations prior to the Authority's final selection; and

WHEREAS, MTC previously took a position to support the Pacheco Pass alignment into the Bay Area based on its higher ridership, service distribution characteristics, compared to the Altamont Pass; and

WHEREAS, it is in the further interest of the region that MTC clarify its position with respect to these issues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that MTC:

1. Support building a statewide high-speed rail system – HSR has the potential to reduce local and statewide vehicle congestion, divert air passenger demand away from congested airports, and reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Re-confirm support for the Pacheco alignment as the main HSR express line between Northern and Southern California as outlined in #3 and 4 below and support improvements in the Altamont corridor, as described in #5, 6 and 7 below, to serve interregional and local travel between the Bay Area and the Northern San Joaquin Valley.
3. Support the Pacheco alignment due to several of the reasons stated in Resolution No. 3198:
 - has the highest statewide ridership demand, and best serves HSR's key market - Northern California to Southern California, connecting the two most congested regions in the state
 - provides direct service to all three major cities - San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland
 - avoids construction of a new bay crossing or tube required by the Altamont Pass entry for San Francisco service
4. Recommend a new Pacheco alignment that routes all trains up the San Francisco peninsula through San Jose and San Francisco, with a connecting Transbay tube to Oakland. This variant provides a superior operating plan compared to the previous Commission adopted Pacheco alignment with all three cities on a single line, is about \$2 billion less than the previous alignment, avoids duplication with BART/Capitol Corridor/ACE, avoids risk of negotiating with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) for East Bay rail right of way needs and avoids construction within the I-880 freeway in Santa Clara County.
5. Endorse the Altamont route as better suited to serve interregional and local travel between the Bay Area and the Northern San Joaquin Valley. At the same time the Pacheco pass alignment is being built, the CHSRA should upgrade interregional services between Peninsula – Tri Valley – Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley. As a first step, ACE service can be improved by adding tracks and improving signaling to provide higher speed and more reliable service that would connect with a future BART station in Livermore (Greenville Road or Isabel/Stanley based on further BART analyses); these improvements would need to be compatible with future HSR. Electrification of ACE trains should be implemented once the UPRR tracks have been

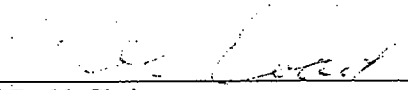
acquired. An electrified regional train capable of higher speeds, with additional grade separations would improve road circulation, and would also be compatible with lightweight equipment operating in the Dumbarton corridor.

6. Request that the CHSRA also evaluate an alternative in the Altamont corridor that terminates HSR at a proposed BART Livermore station where HSR passengers could be dispersed to Bay Area locations throughout the BART system, together with improved ACE service to Santa Clara County.
7. Request that CHSRA consider seeking additional HSR bond funds dedicated to upgrading the Altamont corridor for regional service.

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the California High-Speed Rail Authority; the mayors of San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose; and other interested parties.

FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution supersedes Resolution No. 3198.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



Bill Dodd, Chair

The above resolution was entered into by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission at a regular meeting of the Commission held in Oakland, California, on October 24, 2007.